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New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 6th MEETING

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. PIRIZ-BALLON	(Uruguay)
later:	Mr. GUERRERO (Vice-Chairman)	(Philippines)
later:	Mr. PIRIZ-BALLON (Chairman)	(Uruguay)

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GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

1. Mr. SHAKIR (Iraq) said that the ending of the cold war had been accompanied by important political, economic and social changes but they had unfortunately worked mainly to the advantage of the developed countries and to the disadvantage of the developing ones, which yet hoped for an improvement in their economic situation and for the opening-up of better prospects. However, the economic crisis in the developed countries had grown worse, the gap between rich and poor countries had widened and the disparities had become more acute, owing in particular to the big fall in the prices of commodities and raw materials, which had led to considerable losses of resources by the developing countries, causing a deterioration in their economic situation and in the living standards of their peoples. Accordingly, the United Nations had a duty to help them to rebuild their economic structures so that they could continue their development.

2. Against that background the problem of the foreign debt and its service was one of the most serious facing the developing countries: it was a heavy burden which hampered their efforts to implement their development plans. The developed countries and the international institutions must therefore examine the problem seriously with a view to solving it and must take measures to help the developing countries, in particular by cutting interest rates. It was also necessary to develop cooperation amongst the countries of the South themselves so that they could achieve self-sufficiency. For only self-sufficiency would enable them then to engage in genuine cooperation with the countries of the North.

3. Under the pretext of implementation of Security Council resolution 678 (1990) acts of aggression of terrible violence had been inflicted on Iraq, with destruction of its economic infrastructure and slaughter of its civilian population. The situation was unprecedented both legally and in terms of the magnitude of the material damage and the loss of human lives. Moreover, the country was still under economic siege, although the Government had agreed to carry out the Security Council resolutions and had cooperated actively with the inspection teams sent to Iraq. No action had been taken to lift the inhuman siege despite the desire for peace demonstrated by Iraq. It was an example of manifest exploitation of the suffering of a people facing serious shortages of foodstuffs and medicines. It might be noted in that context that the infant morbidity rate had doubled in two years.

4. His delegation requested the Committee, as an economic organ, to take cognizance of the effects of the economic blockade and the serious threats hanging over the civilian population, mainly the women, children and old people, especially with regard to the increased incidence of disease and the very sharp price rises resulting from the food shortages; it hoped that the Committee would make a vigorous effort to have the economic embargo against Iraq lifted.

5. Mrs. ESCALER (Philippines) said that for decades the international community had equated security and peace with the absence of war but it had gradually realized that world security also depended on the economic and social situation of peoples. At present roughly two thirds of the world's population continued to live in poverty. In many regions unemployment was endemic, and the peasants had no land to till, owing largely to drought. Poverty was a problem which must be tackled with the same vigour as problems of a political nature.

6. As the Rio Declaration explicitly stated, all men and all nations had a right to development. To that end it was imperative for the international community to cooperate actively in a number of areas essential to the achievement of that development; one particular example was the eradication of poverty and relief of debt, the service of which ate up a huge percentage of the annual budget in many countries, including the Philippines, and which required the adoption of more innovative measures. Access to the markets of the developed countries, i.e. the removal of protectionist barriers to the exports of the developing countries, was also of capital importance. It was to be hoped in that connection that the negotiations of the Uruguay round would finally be brought to successful conclusion and would contribute to the establishment of a more open and equitable system. Other important areas in which international cooperation should be developed were direct foreign investment which added to capital formation, the introduction of new technologies in the developing countries which needed them, job creation and the development of export potential. It must be pointed out that the developed countries tended to invest in other developed countries. Furthermore, the transfer of technology was essential to profitability, competitiveness and economic progress. Only the utilization and experience of older technologies could develop the capacity of nations to absorb and use new ones. Like other developing countries, the Philippines therefore sought an acceleration of the transfer of environmentally sound technology on preferential terms. Economic and technical cooperation among the developing countries themselves must also be encouraged, but the developed countries and the international institutions should provide adequate financial support for that purpose.

7. As far as environmental protection was concerned, the Philippines was ready to cooperate with other countries in order to protect the planet's natural heritage but it insisted, like many other developing States, that human development must remain the priority.

8. The Philippines noted with appreciation the current efforts to revitalize and restructure the United Nations. The concrete steps already taken in the economic and social sectors needed to be augmented in order to make the activities of the various intergovernmental bodies and of the development-oriented funds, programmes and agencies more relevant, harmonized and coordinated and therefore more effective. The key aspects of revitalization and restructuring were universality, credibility, action-orientation and, above all, consistency with the democratic character

(Mrs. Escaler, Philippines)

of the United Nations and the basic principles of its Charter. The Philippines committed itself to active participation in the current efforts, which must be pursued in an integrated manner. It also noted with pleasure that the open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group of the Economic and Social Council on Enhancing International Cooperation for Development was to be continued during the current session, and it hoped that the group's work would help to strengthen the role of the United Nations in that field and therefore in the achievement of global peace.

9. Mr. KEITA (Guinea) said that while current economic and social conditions offered opportunities for reorganizing international economic relations on fairer terms, there could be no question that global economic trends were mostly negative, as shown by the slowdown of economic activity in the industrial countries, the weak growth of output in the developing countries and the collapse of the Eastern European economies.

10. Global inflation had abated somewhat, but the situation of developing countries was still a matter of concern, despite the efforts made by most of them, particularly in Africa, where the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development had not lived up to expectations. Guinea was no exception to the rule. It was faced with serious development problems, despite the Government's determined effort to direct social and economic organization towards a more open economy. It had taken measures to put public finance on a firm footing, and the reforms implemented had gone hand in hand with legislation aimed at strengthening the rule of law. The collapse of export prices, however, had caused a deterioration of the country's economic and financial position during 1991. Its GDP had grown by no more than 2.4 per cent, and the social situation still gave cause for concern because of widespread unemployment, particularly among young graduates. Nevertheless, the Government hoped to improve the situation in both areas by implementing large-scale projects designed to promote social and economic development that would benefit the more vulnerable strata.

11. International economic cooperation called for a new partnership inspired by the need to establish a more balanced world economy. That meant that the old antagonisms between States must be overcome and an atmosphere of cooperation must be fostered, which was in line with the new realities. Top priority should be given to improving structures, arrangements and systems that played a key role in economic relations, especially in the areas of trade, environment and finance. In that regard, Guinea endorsed the proposal to hold an international conference on the financing of development.

12. There was no doubt that in order to meet the challenges of development, the countries of the South must continue to revamp their economies with a view to restoring growth on solid foundations. The least developed countries, which were the most vulnerable, should receive priority assistance, and donors must show the political will to achieve the targets set for official development assistance. The international community could contribute to

(Mr. Keita, Guinea)

economic cooperation among developing countries by creating an interregional mechanism designed to support trade between developing countries. In the area of technical cooperation, it could help by promoting the utilization of national capabilities and the training of national cadres.

13. The Rio Conference had highlighted the synergism that existed between environmental and developmental issues; the recognition of that synergism should now be reflected in the provision of substantial amounts of aid to the poor countries to enable them to achieve sustainable development. That could be done by transferring technology and financial resources from the North to the South. In that regard, Guinea wished to stress the need to put in place institutional mechanisms to follow up on the Rio agreements, particularly the high-level Commission on Sustainable Development. His Government also attached great importance to the creation of the negotiating committee for the elaboration of an international convention to control desertification.

14. Poverty led to chaos and all kinds of ills; hence, the rich and the poor countries of the world must reach an understanding in order to ensure a peaceful future for the planet as a whole, based on a fundamental reform of North-South relations that would enable the developing countries to attain their fundamental development objectives by the year 2000. The international community must unite to define concerted programmes of action aimed *inter alia* at enhancing the human and technical resources of the developing countries. The process of restructuring the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system that was currently under way would no doubt be a decisive step forward towards the attainment of a new order based on the equitable sharing of economic and social development.

15. Mr. SUKAM (Malaysia) said that the continuing crisis of the global economy could lead to a major calamity. The growth of developing countries had been hampered by the recession in the developed countries, and it was incumbent upon the latter to seek effective solutions to their problems and to set their economies back on track.

16. The Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Development had referred to some bright spots among the developing countries in South and South-East Asia, but their share of global output was relatively small, and they were faced with increasingly restrictive markets. A case in point was that of tropical timber exports from the South, which were subjected to eco-labelling, whereas timber exports from the North were not, even though temperate timber output was much greater.

17. The developing countries were resolved to do whatever was necessary to resume economic growth, and they had already made heavy sacrifices with a view to achieving structural adjustment. Their efforts would be in vain, however, in the absence of emergency action to revamp the monetary system on the basis of multilaterally agreed principles.

(Mr. Sukam, Malaysia)

18. If the debt of the developing countries was to be reduced, there was an urgent need to raise commodity prices. In order for commodity-dependent countries to resume growth, it was essential not only to rationalize demand and stabilize prices, but also to create manufacturing industries that could contribute to diversification of the economy. The specialized agencies of the United Nations should assist in the development of the physical and other infrastructures needed to facilitate the process.

19. Protectionism had not been halted, and regional blocs had been set up which practised policies of exclusion. That situation could lead to retaliatory measures if the affected parties were not duly consulted and convinced. Malaysia would welcome any initiative aimed at pursuing consultations on the matter and on ways to compensate the countries that had been harmed. His Government also hoped that the Uruguay Round would soon be successfully concluded.

20. The consensus reached at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development must now be translated into practical action. North-South cooperation was central to the prevention of global environmental degradation and the achievement of sustained economic growth. The Commission on Sustainable Development must be established as soon as possible in order to monitor the implementation of the activities provided for under Agenda 21, including those related to technology transfer and financing. On the latter point, the failure by the developed countries to make their intentions clear was somewhat disappointing. Malaysia looked forward to participating in the negotiations to be held on that subject.

21. Finally, there was an urgent need to look into the problems arising from the pollution of international waterways and to review the existing international maritime law.

22. Mr. KRIKORIAN (Armenia) said that his country was at an important stage in its economic development. Faced with a multitude of problems, Armenia had chosen to trust to personal initiative and had been well rewarded. It had undertaken a land reform, liberalized prices and trade, enacted a law to privatize State-owned enterprises, encouraged the establishment of private firms, taken steps to provide social protection and worked towards the conversion of defence industry firms. The State budget was balanced and expenditure prioritized. Defence expenditures, in particular, had been kept to a minimum. Armenia considered the United Nations peace-keeping role to be critical, since peace was the guarantee of economic development.

23. International cooperation was crucial. Before gaining its independence, Armenia had called for horizontal links with the Republics of the former Soviet Union. It was now a full member of the Commonwealth of Independent States and sought to establish cooperative relations not only with its immediate neighbours but with all countries around the world irrespective of their political agendas. It was in that spirit, too, that it supported a

(Mr. Krikorian, Armenia)

successful and speedy conclusion to the Uruguay Round and joined in the appeal by the Group of 77 and the Rio Group to the developed countries to work towards a reduction of their deficits. The United Nations must play a leading role in securing greater economic cooperation and development, as it was called upon to do by its Charter.

24. In conclusion, Armenia was pleased that it was now able to take part in the work of the Committee and would benefit from its deliberations.

25. Mr. MONTAÑO (Mexico) associated himself with the statements made on behalf of the Group of 77 and the Rio Group and recalled that Mexico had always maintained that the Organization was called upon to play as important a role in development as in peace-keeping. It was somewhat surprising that most statements in the general debate in the General Assembly had dealt only with peace-keeping, even though poverty and underdevelopment were known to be the underlying causes of many conflicts.

26. There had been grounds for hope that the end of bipolarism would promote conditions enabling all peoples to fulfil their hope of living in peace and enjoying decent living standards. Instead, the global economic situation was deteriorating and the gap between North and South was widening. Those problems highlighted the importance of international cooperation. The United Nations was ideally placed to launch a concerted world-wide campaign with a view to meeting the challenges facing mankind in the economic, political, population and social spheres and to making optimum use of available human potential.

27. That task called not only for cooperation but also for an open and equitable multilateral trading system. With the proliferation of protectionist measures, the stalling of the Uruguay Round was a matter of concern. Its successful conclusion would have an extremely positive impact on the resumption of world growth and especially on investment and trade flows.

28. In order to tackle the critical situation of their economies and meet the challenges of globalization and interdependence, the developing countries had embarked on a liberalization process at the cost of huge sacrifices which had not been matched by similar action in the industrialized countries. Mexico, for its part, had opened its borders to exports from countries all over the world and had established closer links with the countries of the region under free trade agreements, in accordance with the principles of multilateralism and non-exclusion and on the basis of mutual and comparative advantages.

29. At its current session, the General Assembly was to establish the Commission on Sustainable Development, which would be responsible for following up the implementation of the agreements concluded at Rio de Janeiro on environment and development. To be effective, the Commission would have to be composed of high-level representatives, formulate innovative proposals and refrain from violating the sovereign rights of States. The richest countries,

(Mr. Montaña, Mexico)

which were those that polluted most, would have to commit themselves formally to financing the activities provided for under Agenda 21.

30. Operational activities were a major component of the Organization's international cooperation activities. Various proposals for enhancing their effectiveness had been put forward. Any reform should be governed by the principles of sovereign equality of States, equitable geographical distribution and democratic procedure in decision-making. The legitimate desire to improve the Organization's structures should not lead to the neglect of some of the Organization's spheres of activity. The objective must be to shape a world order that would be in the service of mankind, in other words, one of equity among peoples, peace and development.

31. Mr. AL-FARDAN (Bahrain) said that the decades of cold war had been characterized by the predominance of political over economic issues, whence the guarded and indeed worried reactions to the present state of the world economy. With the end of the cold war, the resources released by the reduction in military budgets should be one of the main sources of capital that would stimulate a resumption of growth, in a context of sustainable development. Developed and developing countries owed it to themselves to cooperate, within the framework of the United Nations system, in order to promote the independent development of the developing countries and rectify the shortcomings of the world economy as a whole. The need to alleviate the economic difficulties of the developing countries and of the least developed countries placed a substantial burden of responsibility on the industrialized countries, particularly since the latter had succeeded in controlling inflation while maintaining growth.

32. The recessionary tendencies of the 1980s persisted, causing the continued worsening of the situation in developing countries, particularly African countries which were still suffering from drought and famine and Latin American countries which were still weighed down by a heavy debt burden. The net decline in the growth rate of the global economy during the 1980s was probably attributable to deflationary monetary and financial policies, as well as to factors such as natural disasters, drought, desertification, imbalances in some countries' balance of payments, exchange rate fluctuations, the unprecedented rise in interest rates, the decline in commodity prices and the development of protectionist tendencies and discriminatory practices in some countries. Those internal and external factors explained the decline in the growth rate and in per capita income in most developing countries during the 1980s, the external environment having forced those countries to adopt structural adjustment policies which had resulted in a negative transfer of resources, a decline in investments and a reduction in development budgets, including the funds allocated to social services.

33. The growing marginalization of the developing countries because of their shrinking role in trade and financial relations had undoubtedly widened the gap between them and the developed countries, and had contributed

(Mr. Al-Fardan, Bahrain)

significantly to the deterioration in living conditions and in economic and social infrastructures. That gap between North and South was one reason for the instability experienced by some developing countries, which was bound to have repercussions on the countries of the North.

34. The United Nations played a vital role in international cooperation, and preserving that role had become even more crucial because recent radical changes on the international scene were moving in the direction of expanded international multilateral cooperation. The scientific, institutional and political obstacles to such cooperation had still to be removed. The Rio Conference had provided the opportunity for the international community to take the first steps towards achieving common aspirations for the twenty-first century. No one could deny the magnitude of the threats to the global environment. The ecological, health and economic repercussions were felt mainly by the developing countries, which had neither the financial resources nor the technical means to resolve those problems. The Rio Conference had been the culmination of lengthy negotiations in which many viewpoints had been reconciled, the magnitude of the threat having convinced all countries that those problems could be solved only through joint action.

35. In order to guarantee sustainable, adequate and ecologically sound development, projects based on the wise use of natural resources should be supported. Through environmental impact studies, care should be taken to ensure that projects that did the least damage to the environment were promoted.

36. Mr. Guerrero (Philippines), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

37. Mr. MURIITHI (Kenya) said that prospects for growth in the 1990s looked gloomy. There had been little or no improvement in the per capita income gap between the industrialized world and the countries of the South. The incidence of poverty in the developing countries would remain high, with almost one billion people having per capita incomes of less than 300 dollars a year by the year 2000. While the quality of life might improve in certain parts of the world, the number of Africans living below the poverty line was projected to increase at an alarming rate. The critical economic and social conditions affecting the millions of people in Africa were alarming. Over the past decade, economic growth had stagnated in some African countries while others had experienced negative growth. The reasons for the decline were many; they included the debt burden, worsening terms of trade, declining commodity prices and shrinking direct foreign investment, the effects of structural adjustment and unemployment. The African countries had made serious development efforts, but had been frustrated by the shortage of official development assistance in the form of grants and concessional loans and the crippling debt burden, which now amounted to an annual repayment level of about 25 billion dollars.

(Mr. Muriithi, Kenya)

38. On average, the people of Africa lived in abject poverty. That situation was aggravated by the growing food emergency in many parts of the continent, where almost 40 million people were at risk of starvation. There were acute food shortages in East and southern Africa in particular, as a result of climatic aberrations and the influx of refugees, and the countries concerned deserved the attention of the international community. African countries could not afford to meet their international obligations and import food at the same time. They were making every effort to cooperate among themselves in order to achieve sustainable and self-reliant development based on endogenous growth. They firmly believed that South-South cooperation was complementary to North-South cooperation. The recently signed Treaty on the African Economic Community and other subregional and regional arrangements were targeted at achieving that fundamental objective. The international community must take the measures agreed to in the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s in order to assist the African countries.

39. The United Nations had a central role to play in enhancing international cooperation for development. The restructuring and revitalization of the Organization in the economic, social and related fields was urgent, to strengthen those aspects and make them more responsive to the changing realities and development needs of the developing countries. The proposed reform of operational activities was an important step forward, but should be matched by the necessary financial resources.

40. Like other developing countries, Kenya was concerned at the failure of the international financial system to furnish adequate development capital, leaving the developing countries with serious financial problems. There had been a sharp contraction in external commercial flows and a virtual stagnation of official development assistance at less than half the agreed level of 0.7 per cent of GNP of the developed countries. That target must be reached as soon as possible in order to achieve the objectives for sustainable development under Agenda 21. The developed countries, having acknowledged their responsibility for ensuring sustainable development in view of the pressures their economies placed on the global environment, must fulfil that responsibility through the transfer of financial resources and appropriate technology. Kenya attached great importance to the decision to establish the Commission on Sustainable Development, which should operate as a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council. Among the decisions taken at UNCED, Kenya welcomed the attention accorded to desertification, one of the serious problems facing the African continent, which had retarded development and given rise to untold poverty. The proposed international convention to combat desertification particularly in Africa, should contribute to the elimination of that scourge.

41. In discussing the agenda items allocated to it, the Second Committee must keep in mind that, in recent years, developing countries such as Kenya had undertaken far-reaching reforms and restructuring of their economies to give greater emphasis to the private sector in the development process. Those

(Mr. Muriithi, Kenya)

reforms had involved privatization of public companies. While their primary object had been the improvement of domestic economic performance, they would also benefit the industrialized countries by opening up markets for their goods and facilitating the repatriation of investment capital and dividends. The reforms were also targeted at creating attractive foreign investment opportunities, either directly or through joint ventures. However, the protectionist policies and practices being pursued by various developed countries were hindering the expansion of international trade, thereby denying developing countries the benefits of their reforms. It was necessary, therefore, for developed countries to take the necessary measures and inject the required political will to make possible the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round.

42. Through its operational activities for development, the United Nations had contributed to the mobilization of resources and technical assistance for deployment in developing countries, but such activities could only be enhanced further through the determined will and genuine support of the entire international community.

43. Mr. SARDENBERG (Brazil) observed that the Governments of all Member States were striving to raise the living standards of their populations and that each was acutely aware of the needs and demands of its people and of the available resources, and, through resource allocation and the establishment of policies, was seeking to satisfy those needs and demands as far as possible. The very multiplicity of the paths chosen by different States, with varying emphases on market forces, planning or social aspects, testified to the fact that such policies must, by definition, be strictly country-specific. It would serve no purpose, therefore, to attempt to determine a universally applicable national policy for development. The national efforts of developing countries could, however, be greatly enhanced through international cooperation, which was one of the principal functions of the United Nations as laid down in its Charter. That, therefore, was what the Second Committee should concentrate on. The cooperation encouraged by the Organization could take two forms: first, the use of the considerable expertise built up by the collection and analysis of data and the formulation of concepts and ideas, taking advantage of the pooling of Member States' resources in that area. Supplied on request, that expertise could contribute to the evaluation and design of alternative policy options by Member States. Secondly, the United Nations was a forum for the discussion of issues of a global economic nature. By virtue of its universality and its democratic decision-making processes it was in a unique position to deal with those issues beyond the scope of national policies, such as fostering trade by increasing market access, facilitating the transfer of technology, stimulating foreign direct investment, encouraging the flow of financial resources to the developing countries, and coordinating macroeconomic policies. All Member States stood to gain by creating an international economic environment conducive to development, as the removal of existing obstacles would benefit all countries. Greater market access for developing countries' exports would give

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

them the means of increasing their imports as well, thus stimulating their economies.

44. As the Secretary-General had pointed out, the Organization would require strengthening in several key aspects in order to promote the agenda for development. For instance, in his delegation's view it was necessary to strengthen the Secretariat's analytical capabilities so that positive contributions to development could be made in the form of reports and recommendations to Members and intergovernmental bodies.

45. In conclusion, his delegation wished to underline the current grim situation of the global economy. The developing countries had already lost one decade, the 1980s. The current decade, while it had shown some improvement, was far from providing the conditions for the necessary progress. Indeed, it was paradoxical that the developing countries had, to varying degrees, been responsible for what economic momentum there was. That had been achieved in large measure through structural adjustment programmes which, though they had laid the groundwork for growth, had done so at an enormous social cost. In contrast, stagnation in the industrialized world had severely dampened the prospects for renewed development while amplifying those programmes' negative social consequences.

46. Mr. Piriz-Ballon (Uruguay) resumed the Chair.

47. Mr. RAICHEV (Bulgaria) noted that during the past year there had been considerable progress toward strengthening multilateral cooperation. Recent events in many parts of the world had underscored the indissoluble links between economic development and political and social stability. It had become obvious that securing durable peace would not be possible without social stability and sound economic conditions. The international community was also becoming aware that development should be human-centred, equitable, and environmentally sustainable, and recognizing that new relations should be established founded on the promotion of democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, a market economy, social justice and security.

48. At the same time, the past decade, despite some achievements in the economic and social fields, had left unsolved the problems of poverty, underdevelopment, famine, population growth, environmental degradation, epidemic diseases and accelerated migration. Another serious concern was the global slowdown of the world economy. The continuing imbalances in the international trade and financial systems, excessive debt burdens, inadequate resources for development, and the generally unfavourable economic environment were among the factors that were continuing to hamper the growth and development of many countries. The least developed countries, particularly those in Africa, were facing an especially difficult situation. The unprecedented transformations taking place in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe had proved to be much more complex and painful than previously expected. Output and income levels in those countries had fallen sharply and

(Mr. Raichev, Bulgaria)

were a major cause of the negative trends in the world economy. In the developed economies the recovery was still weak and fragile.

49. All of those considerations called for a concerted global response whereby the United Nations should maintain an integrated overview and address effectively the problems of development. There was a need for tangible decisions aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of the Organization in the economic and social sectors; and the ongoing restructuring should contribute to that end.

50. In view of the accelerated integration and globalization of markets, the development of each country depended more than ever on securing a favourable international economic climate. The revival of world economic growth on a sustainable basis should therefore be one of the principal objectives of international cooperation for development in the 1990s; the coordination of macroeconomic policies to find solutions to the existing problems in the international monetary and trading systems was essential. The opening of markets through a balanced outcome of the Uruguay Round, an easing of debt burdens, and the mobilization by sufficient resources for development assistance were important elements of that process.

51. One of the greatest challenges for the current decade was the transition to democracy and a market economy in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Experience had shown, however, that such a transition was not possible without the support of the international community. It was essential, therefore, for the United Nations to play a more active role in supporting the reforms and in promoting cooperation with those countries.

52. The past decade had brought to the fore environmental sustainability as a key dimension of development. The Rio Conference had agreed on a global strategy for achieving environmentally sustainable development in the context of Agenda 21. It was now essential to build an effective institutional follow-up to ensure the practical implementation of the decisions taken. The negotiations to be conducted by the Second Committee on questions related to the Commission on Sustainable Development were particularly important in that regard.

53. Another important element in the efforts to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations to deal with the problems of development was the improvement of the governance and financing of the operational activities of the United Nations system. Bulgaria supported the proposals aimed at making the system more responsive to the needs of Member States by concentrating on activities at the field level and providing a unified United Nations presence at the country level. At the same time, the system should strictly observe the basic principles of neutrality, impartiality and cultural sensitivity. There was also a need for closer cooperation between the United Nations system and the Bretton Woods institutions on the basis of comparative advantage.

/...

(Mr. Raichev, Bulgaria)

54. Bulgaria strove to participate actively in international economic cooperation. Over the past two years, the process of change had yielded encouraging results. Despite social and political tensions, the reforms were being carried out in a peaceful manner. Considerable progress had been made towards the establishment of the legal foundations for the functioning of a market economy and the consolidation of democratic institutions. A number of practical steps had also been taken in the economic sphere; a special role was being assigned to anti-inflationary measures, stabilization of the balance of payments and the restructuring of industries. Those measures were being implemented in close collaboration with IMF, the World Bank and EBRD.

55. As a European country, Bulgaria attached particular importance to its participation in European economic cooperation and to its accession to the Council of Europe, the ongoing negotiations for its association with the European Community, and cooperation with EFTA. It also attached importance to the activities of the Economic Commission for Europe, which could provide support to countries in transition. Bulgaria was interested in developing economic cooperation with all its neighbours on a bilateral and multilateral basis. Subregional cooperation in the Black Sea area was a new and positive phenomenon which could contribute to the building of a new Europe and the establishment of an all-European economic area, as well as to the strengthening of security and confidence in the region.

56. Mr. CISSE (Senegal) said that at the economic and financial levels, the past two years had been marked by a series of international events which had drawn the attention of world leaders to the urgent need to ensure the economic growth and sustainable development of poor countries.

57. The international community had become aware of the need to strengthen international cooperation for sustainable development, a prerequisite for international peace and security. Among the measures that had resulted from that awareness, were the adoption of Agenda 21, the restructuring of the United Nations in the economic and social fields and the adoption of the New Agenda for the Development of Africa.

58. The Rio Conference had approved measures designed to reverse the effects of environmental degradation and promote sustainable and ecologically sound development in all countries. The decision to establish a commission on sustainable development to provide an institutional monitoring framework for the achievement of the objectives of Agenda 21 demonstrated the international community's commitment, at the highest level, to the economic and social progress of all countries. The hopes aroused by the establishment of that commission should lead the developed countries to translate the commitments made at the Conference into concrete terms and, in particular, to release the necessary resources.

59. In the context of the follow-up to the Conference, his delegation also noted with interest the UNDP initiative to support developing countries in drawing up and managing their sustainable development plans.

(Mr. Cisse, Senegal)

60. Another essential point of particular interest to Africa was the preparation of an international convention to combat desertification. It was to be hoped that the negotiating committee to be established for the purpose would have the necessary logistical and financial resources to enable it to complete the drafting of the convention by June 1994, as envisaged in Agenda 21. Senegal hoped to participate actively in the negotiations on the adoption of a decision concerning the convening of an international conference on high seas fisheries in 1994.

61. With regard to the ongoing process of restructuring in the economic and social sectors, the high-level debate in the Economic and Social Council had led to a consensus on the role of the United Nations in the new world order and in achieving the key development objectives for the 1990s, which involved, in particular, strengthening international cooperation for sustained and lasting growth of the world economy, the development of the developing countries, macroeconomic management and the eradication of poverty. The negotiations on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations would have been more productive, however, if they had been based on General Assembly resolution 45/264, or if it had been recognized that the unique role of the United Nations in the promotion of international cooperation for development was based on the principles of universality, sovereign equality of States, non-intervention in their internal affairs and respect for the democratic decision-making process and equitable geographical representation.

62. With regard to the critical economic situation in Africa, the slow progress in implementing the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa had dashed the hopes aroused by its adoption. The financing needed for the implementation of that new programme was still not forthcoming. The Department of International Economic and Social Affairs should therefore make greater efforts to mobilize the required resources. In that respect, Senegal called for the establishment of an African fund for commodities diversification.

63. In that context, he wished to thank Japan for the interest it had shown in the economic situation in Africa and the welcome initiative it had taken in organizing a conference on African development to be held at Tokyo in 1993.

64. The question of financial resources was central to all the issues he had raised. For that reason, if the international community did not release the necessary resources in accordance with the commitments it had made to the economic growth and development of the developing countries, and if it did not show solidarity in the struggle against the deep-seated causes of poverty and economic stagnation and did not accept an inequitable share of adjustment, the implementation of the Agenda for peace was liable to be jeopardized.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (A/C.2/47/L.1/Add.1)

65. Mr. AMAZIANE (Morocco), referring to the document on the organization of work (A/C.2/47/L.1/Add.1) said that some documents scheduled to be issued on 5 October 1992 were still not available in distribution, in particular, the report of the Secretary-General on the international debt crisis and development (A/47/396). If the dates of issue of documents were not respected, it might be necessary to reconsider the dates for the consideration of the items they related to.

66. Mrs. KELLEY (Secretary of the Committee) said that she would immediately check the status of the document in question and would inform the representative of Morocco of the situation without delay.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.